

GOAL-SHY WYCOMBE WAKE UP AFTER SLOUGH SHOCKS

by Argus
Wycombe Wanderers 3,
Slough Town 1

A JOKE is a joke but when unassuming Slough Town, fourth from the foot of the Corinthian League, took a 47th minute lead in this Berks and Bucks second round tie at Loakes Park—after being virtually outplayed, by the Isthmian League leaders, Wycombe fans hardly knew whether to laugh or cry.

By the time former Wanderer John McCullum had snapped the ball past Dennis Syrett, to round off a sprightly return against his old club, the Wanderers should have been five or six goals up and thinking wistfully of the after-the-match bath.

Clever positional play by Geoff Redford—the heavyweight goalkeeper who lost his place in the Hounslow Town team when he broke an ankle playing against Wycombe in the Amateur Cup—skimmed much of the menace from the Wanderers' attack.

WHAT A CONTRAST!

But he was helped by some curiously inaccurate and effete shooting by the Wycombe forwards. There was a bizarre contrast between the men who tapped and fumbled goalwards on Saturday and the thunder-booted destroyers who hit eight against Clapton in the previous game.

Fortunately for Wycombe pride, the McCullum opening goal heralded better things. But before inside-left Ron Fryer wound up the proceedings with two highly efficient goals it took a peculiar penalty award to put the Wanderers on terms.

Lanky Ges Glenville, the Slough left back, got himself all tangled up cutting out a pass to Worley on the wing. He was lying right across the penalty-box line when he handled the ball, long legs inside the box, body and head innocently outside. Referee Mr. A. J. North had a word with a linesman before waving Paul Bates forward to take the crucial kick.

All praise to Slough for surpassing their normal form to give Wycombe more shocks than they bargained for. The Wanderers, by virtue of their exalted League position are the amateurs' Arsenal at the moment—everybody wants to tickle the giant's toes and singe his beard, particularly when they come from the Corinthian League.

Slough were no exception, and even if they did have three authentic outside-lefts in their forward line their straight-forward no-nonsense football gave Wycombe plenty to think about.

Even so — Wycombe should have walked away with the game. Chances galore fell at the feet of the home forwards, but some deplorable shooting and sheer good fortune on Slough's part kept the half-time goal sheet blank.

NOT THEIR DAY

Within minutes Wycombe had the look of men who knew it was not their day. A Worley pass slipped Trott through, and with everybody getting ready to cheer a 180-second goal, and with the Town defence charging around in circles, Glenville got a boot to the

ball and smacked it off a goal-post to safety.

Hardly had Slough digested this escape when Bates burst into the penalty area, charmed his way past Redford and was robbed of the ball by a do-or-die tackle.

Although the Wanderers were attacking almost continually and making ample use of wingers Len Worley and Gerald Free, they just could not force home an advantage. Cliff Trott hit a shot on to the Slough crossbar, and Ron Fryer, scheming incessantly, kept Redford busy with a flow of shots, none of them powerful or angled enough to beat him.

REALLY HURT

While the Slough defence was wisely riding its luck, the fast visiting forwards were always dangerous in breakaways—particularly on the wings. When Jock Loughran, Slough's converted centre-forward, turned and shot unexpectedly, Dennis Syrett made a really brilliant save to stop a certainty.

McCullum's welcome home goal, two minutes after the interval, really hurt the Wanderers, and they fought tenaciously for the equaliser. Bates grazed a post with a flying header before beating Redford from the penalty spot.

If anything, the Wanderers were even more "in the saddle" during the second half—and they had their reward at long last. Free, playing very assuredly on the left, gave Fryer the chance to first-time Wycombe into the lead, and after Trott had done everything but find the net, Fryer lashed in an excellent header from another Free centre.